

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
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AMEMBASSY LONDON  
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU, CY

SUBJECT: GREEK REACTION TO ECEVIT: WATCHFUL WAITING

REF: ATHENS 5944

1. WATCHFUL WAITING BEST CHARACTERIZES THE REACTION IN GREECE TO TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS GOVERNMENT, TO HIS INTERVIEW IN AKROPOLIS (REFTEL), AND TO HIS SPEECH BEFORE THE TURKISH PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY OUTLINING HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM. UNTIL SUCH TIME AS ECEVIT MAY RECEIVE THE NECESSARY VOTE OF CONFIDENCE, THE PREVAILING ATTITUDE HERE SEEMS TO BE, "LET US WAIT ANDSEE WHAT WILL HAPPEN."

2. THE MEDIA HAVE GIVEN PROMINENT BUT GENERALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD TREATMENT TO RECENT TURKISH DEVELOPMENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, PNL Y INDEPENDENT KATHIMERINI, THUS FAR, HAS CHOSEN TO EDITORIALIZE ON THE AKROPOLIS INTERVIEW. IT DESCRIBED ECEVIT'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS AS RESTRAINED, CONCILIATORY AND ALMOST GENTLE.

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BUT IT WARNED THAT THE TURKISH PRIME MINISTER'S SEEMING CONCESSION IN HIS WILLINGNESS TO SEPARATE THE STATUS OF THE ISLANDS FROM THE ISSUE OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF DID NOT ALTER THE BASIC TURKISH POLICY OF FURTHERING ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE AEGEAN AT THE EXPENSE OF GREECE (CLAIMING, FOR EXAMPLE, HALF OF THE AEGEAN CONTINENTAL SHELF).

3. REPORTING ON ECEVIT'S PRESENTATION OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S PLATFORM HAS LIKEWISE BEEN ESSENTIALLY FACTUAL. HOWEVER, SOME HEADLINES POINTED TO THE GENERAL NATURE OF HIS PRESENTATION WHILE OTHERS SAW A TOUGH LINE EMERGING FROM HIS COMMENTS ON THE AEGEAN AND CYPRUS. THESE HEADLINES ARE ILLUSTRATIVE: LIBERAL, OPPOSITION TO VIMA: "THE 'SISMIK' MOVES FROM THE SEA OF MARMARA--ECEVIT ANNOUNCES NEW PRESSURES IN THE AEGEAN--HE WILL DEFEND TURKEY'S 'RIGHTS' ON THE AIRSPACE AND THE CONTINENTAL SHELF;". EXTREME RIGHT ELEFTHEROS COSMOS: "ECEVIT ADOPTS A 'HARD LINE'--WHAT HE SAID ABOUT THE CONTINENTAL SHELF, AIRSPACE AND CYPRUS;" PRO-GOVERNMENT AKROPOLIS: "ECEVIT ANNOUNCING HIS PLATFORM: WE SHALL CONTINUE THE 1974 POLICY ON THE AEGEAN--'WE SHALL SAFEGUARD OUR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF AND THE AIRSPACE'--ALSO ALLUSIONS AGAINST THE U.S.A. REGARDING AID;" ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE ESTIA: "TURKISH POLICY UNCHANGED--CYPRUS AND AEGEAN--INDIRECT THREATS AGAINST THE U.S. A.--ABSTENTION OF THREE PARTIES' DEPUTIES;" LEFTIST, OPPOSITION TA NEA: "IN HIS PLATFORM STATEMENT ECEVIT TOUGH AGAIN ON THE AEGEAN QUESTION--HE INSISTS ON BIZONALITY FOR CYPRUS;" PRO-GOVERNMENT VRADYNI: "ECEVIT'S VAGUE STATEMENTS--NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT CYPRUS AND THE AEGEAN;" AND LEFTISH ELEFTHEROTYPIA: "ECEVIT TOUGH ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION, UNCLEAR ON THE AEGEAN CRISIS--RESERVATIONS IN ATHENS WITH REGARD TO HIS SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT."

4. SPEAKING AT A FOREIGN PRESS ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON TODAY, GEORGE MAVROS, THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION LEADER AS PRESIDENT OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER, SAID THAT ECEVIT'S POLICY DECLARATIONS REVEALED "NO NEW DEPARTURES FROM HIS ALREADY FAMILIAR LINE." MOREOVER, MAVROS ADDED, "MR. ECEVIT'S CHOICE OF WORDS DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESTORATION OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH GREECE."

5. ONE ITEM OF INTEREST WAS A TORY CIRCULATING YESTERDAY (JUNE 28) IN THE PRESS TO THE EFFECT THAT "DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES" IN ATHENS INDICATED THE GOG FELT AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN CARAMANLIS AND ECEVIT AT THIS POINT WOULD BE PREMATURE. (IN HIS PRESS ASSOCIATION SPEECH TODAY MAVROS SAID HE COULD NOT SEE WHAT PURPOSE SUCH A MEETING WOULD SERVE.) THE ACCOUNTS STRESSED THE NEED FOR GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES TO BE HANDLED AT A LOWER LEVEL FIRST IN ORDER TO AVERT THE DANGER OF A STALEMATE ARISING AT A SUMMIT MEETING. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN SOME PASSING PRESS COMMENT THAT VARIOUS MEMBERS OF ECEVIT'S GOVERNMENT, WHO HAD ALSO SERVED IN HIS GOVERNMENT IN 1974, SUCH AS DEFENSE MINISTER ISIK, ARE ANTAGONISTIC TO GREECE. HOWEVER, SEVERAL MFA OFFICIALS HAVE POINTED OUT PRIVATELY TO US THAT THEY BELIEVE ECEVIT HAS PUT TOGETHER A BALANCED CABINET.

6. COMMENT: AT THIS POINT, MOST GREEKS ARE OBVIOUSLY WARY

OF MAKING ANY FIRM PRONOUNCEMENTS ON WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT EVOLVE  
IN TURKEY. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY DISAPPOINTED THAT THE TURKISH  
ELECTIONS DID NOT PRODUCE A STRONG MAJORITY GOVERNMENT. AND  
THEY HOLD NO ILLUSIONS THAT, EVEN SHOULD ECEVIT OBTAIN A VOTE  
OF CONFIDENCE, THE SETTLEMENT OF THEIR DISPUTES WITH TURKEY WILL  
BE SOON IN COMING. ON THE CONTRARY, THE GREEKS ARE ANTICIPATING  
A PROTRACTED PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKEY OVER THE AEGEAN  
AND CYPRUS, A PERIOD WHICH THEY ANTICIPATE WILL BE A DIFFICULT ONE.  
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